

NSC BRIEFING

5 March 1957

UK POSITION IN ARABIA

I. UK position in Arabian Peninsula--both along Persian Gulf coast and in Aden to south--increasingly threatened by Nasr's manipulation of Arab nationalism.

A. UK influence based on treaties with various local rulers.

B. London determined to hang on, use force if need be.

II. Considered in order, threat to UK that hurts most in Gulf region is in fabulously oil-rich Kuwait (whence UK derived 60% of crude).

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Egyptian influence mounting and UK

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"advisors" being ousted.

III. Nationalist ferment also on increase in important oil areas of Bahrein, Qatar. Egyptians spearheading anti-UK activities.

IV. Little reporting on strength of UK hold in next region--seven backward ex-pirate "Trucial Sheikhdoms."

V. In biggest territory of all--UK-allied Sultanate of Muscat and Oman--British in '55 helped Sultan throw Saudis out of Buraimi, also staged show of force that helped him re-establish control over interior Oman.

A. Omani refugees who fled in '55 now going from Saudi Arabia to Cairo: may be getting arms, fedayeen training in Egypt.

VI. Finally, in Protectorate areas behind Aden Colony, already armed clashes in progress.

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